



News Release

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MISSING AIRMEN FROM VIETNAM WAR ACCOUNTED FOR

The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) announced today that the remains of two U.S. servicemen, missing from the Vietnam War, have been accounted for and will be returned to their families for burial with full military honors.

U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Robert E. Pietsch, 31, of Pittsburgh, Pa., and Maj. Louis F. Guillermin, 25, of West Chester, Pa., will be buried as a group Oct. 16, in a single casket representing the two servicemen at Arlington National Cemetery, near Washington, D.C. Guillermin's individual remains will be buried Oct. 5, 2013, in Broomall, Pa.

On April 30, 1968, Guillermin and Pietsch were on an armed-reconnaissance mission when their A-26A Invader aircraft crashed in Savannakhet Province, Laos. Witnesses saw an explosion on the ground and did not see any signs of survivors. Search and rescue efforts were unsuccessful, and Guillermin and Pietsch were listed as Missing in Action.

In 1994, a joint U.S./Lao People's Democratic Republic (LPDR) team, lead by the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC), surveyed the crash site in Savannakhet Province, Laos. The team recovered human remains and evidence, but was unable to fully survey the site due to the presence of dangerous unexploded ordinance.

In 2006, joint U.S./LPDR teams assisted by Explosive Ordnance Disposal personnel cleared the site and gathered additional human remains and evidence such as personal effects and crew-related equipment.

The remains recovered were analyzed by scientists from JPAC and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory using circumstantial evidence and forensic analysis such as mtDNA comparisons. Portions of the remains were individually identified as Guillermin through an mtDNA match from a hair sample from Guillermin's medical file. The rest of the remains recovered were not individually identified, but correspond to both Pietsch and Guillermin.

There are more than 1,640 American service members that are still unaccounted-for from the Vietnam War.

For additional information on the Defense Department's mission to account for missing Americans, visit the DPMO web site at www.dtic.mil/dpmo or call (703) 699-1169.

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